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AN
ESSAY
ON
MAN.



ESSAY
OF
MAN.



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ON

MAN.

BY ALEXANDER POPE.

INSCRIBED TO
HENRY SAINT-JOHN, LORD BOLINGBROKE.

Cornish Edition.



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ESSAY

ON

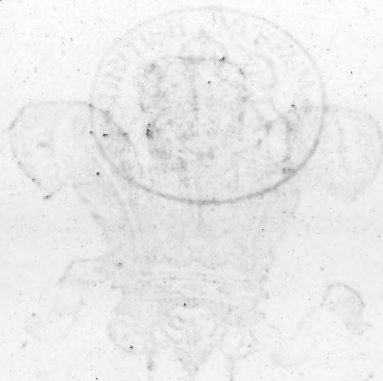
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BY ALEXANDER FORD

ENTRICKED TO

HENRY SAINT-JOHN, LORD BOLINGBROKE

Fourth Edition



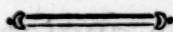
WILKINSON

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1793



THE
DESIGN.



HAVING proposed to write some pieces on human life and manners, such as (to use my Lord Bacon's expression) "come home to men's business and bosoms," I thought it more satisfactory to begin with considering man in the abstract, his nature, and his state: since, to prove any moral duty, to enforce any moral precept, or to examine the perfection or imperfection of any creature whatsoever, it is

necessary first to know what condition and relation it is placed in, and what is the proper end and purpose of its being.

The science of human nature is, like all other sciences, reduced to a few clear points: there are not many certain truths in the world. It is therefore in the anatomy of the mind, as in that of the body: more good will accrue to mankind by attending to the large, open, and perceptible parts, than by studying too much such finer nerves and vessels, the conformations and uses of which will for ever escape our observation. The disputes are all upon these last; and I will venture to say, they have less sharpened the wits than the hearts of men against each other, and have diminished the

practice more than advanced the theory of morality.

If I could flatter myself that this Essay has any merit, it is in steering betwixt the extremes of doctrines seemingly opposite; in passing over terms utterly unintelligible; and in forming a temperate, yet not inconsistent, and a short, yet not imperfect system of Ethics.

This I might have done in prose; but I chose verse, and even rhyme, for two reasons: the one will appear obvious; that principles, maxims, or precepts so written, both strike the reader more strongly at first, and are more easily retained by him afterwards. The other may seem odd, but it is true; I found I could express them more shortly this way than in

prose itself; and nothing is truer than that much of the force, as well as grace, of arguments or instructions depends on their conciseness. I was unable to treat this part of my subject more in detail, without becoming dry and tedious; or more poetically, without sacrificing perspicuity to ornament, without wandering from the precision, or breaking the chain of reasoning. If any man can unite all these, without diminution of any of them, I freely confess he will compass a thing above my capacity.

ALEX. POPE.





AN
ESSAY ON MAN.

EPISTLE I.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect to the Universe.

Of Man in the abstract....That we can judge only with regard to our own system, being ignorant of the relations of systems and things....That man is not to be deemed imperfect, but a Being suited to his place and rank in the creation, agreeable to the general order of things, and conformable to Ends and Relations to him unknown....That it is partly upon his ignorance of future events, and partly upon the hope of a future state, that all his happiness in the present depends....The pride of aiming at more knowledge, and pretending to more perfection, the cause of man's error and misery....The impiety of putting himself in the place of God, and judging of the fitness or unfitness, perfection or imperfection, justice or injustice, of his dispensations....The absurdity of conceiving himself the final cause of the creation, or expecting that perfection in the moral world which is not in the natural....The unreasonableness of his complaints against Providence, while on the one hand he demands the perfections of the angels, and on the other the bodily qualifications of the brutes; though to possess any of the sensitive faculties in a higher degree would render him miserable....That throughout the whole visible world an universal order and gradation in the sensual and mental faculties is observed, which causes a subordination of creature to creature, and of all creatures to man....The gradations of sense, instinct, thought, reflection, reason; that reason alone countervails all the other faculties....How much further this order and subordination of living creatures may extend, above and below us; were any part of which broken, not that part only, but the whole connected creation must be destroyed....The extravagance, madness, and pride of such a desire....The consequence of all the absolute submission due to Providence, both as to our present and future state.

AWAKE, my St.-John! leave all meaner things
To low ambition, and the pride of kings;

Let us, since life can little more supply
Than just to look about us and to die,
Expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;
A mighty maze! but not without a plan;
A wild, where weeds and flow'rs promiscuous
shoot ;
Or garden, tempting with forbidden fruit.
Together let us beat this ample field,
Try what the open, what the covert yield;
The latent tracts, the giddy heights explore,
Of all who blindly creep, or sightless soar :
Eye nature's walks, shoot folly as it flies,
And catch the manners living as they rise ;
Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;
But vindicate the ways of God to man.

1. Say first, of God above, or man below,
What can we reason, but from what we know?
Of man, what see we but his station here,
From which to reason, or to which refer?
Thro' worlds unnumber'd tho' the God be known,
'Tis ours to trace him only in our own.
He, who through vast immensity can pierce,
See worlds on worlds compose one universe,
Observe how system into system runs,
What other planets circle other suns,
What varied being peoples every star,
May tell why heav'n has made us as we are.
But of this frame, the bearings, and the ties,
The strong connexions, nice dependencies,
Gradations just, has thy pervading soul
Look'd through? or can a part contain the whole?

Is the great chain, that draws all to agree,
And drawn supports, upheld by God or thee?

2. Presumptuous man! the reason wouldst thou
find,

Why form'd so weak, so little, and so blind?

First, if thou canst, the harder reason guess,

Why form'd no weaker, blinder, and no less.

Ask of thy mother earth, why oaks are made

Taller or stronger than the weeds they shade?

Or ask of yonder argent fields above,

Why Jove's satellites are less than Jove?

Of systems possible, if 'tis confest

'That wisdom infinite must form the best,

Where all must full or not coherent be,

And all that rises, rise in due degree;

Then, in the scale of reas'ning life, 'tis plain,
There must be, somewhere, such a rank as
man:

And all the question (wrangle e'er so long)
Is only this, if God has plac'd him wrong?

Respecting man, whatever wrong we call,
May, must be right, as relative to all.

In human works, though labour'd on with pain,
A thousand movements scarce one purpose gain;

In God's, one single can its end produce;

Yet serves to second too some other use.

So man, who here seems principal alone,

Perhaps acts second to some sphere unknown,

Touches some wheel, or verges to some goal;

'Tis but a part we see, and not a whole.

When the proud steed shall know why man
restrains

His fiery course, or drives him o'er the plains;
When the dull ox, why now he breaks the clod,
Is now a victim, and now Egypt's god:
Then shall man's pride and dulness comprehend
His action's, passion's, being's use and end;
Why doing, suff'ring, check'd, impell'd; and why
This hour a slave, the next a deity.

Then say not man's imperfect, heav'n in fault;
Say rather, man's as perfect as he ought:
His knowledge measur'd to his state and place;
His time a moment, and a point his space.
If to be perfect in a certain sphere,
What matter, soon or late, or here or there?

The blest to-day, is as completely so
As who began a thousand years ago.

3. Heav'n from all creatures hides the book of
fate,

All but the page prescribed, their present state:
From brutes what men, from men what spirits
know:

Or who could suffer being here below?

The lamb thy riot dooms to bleed to-day,

Had he thy reason, would he skip and play?

Pleas'd to the last, he crops the flow'ry food,

And licks the hand just rais'd to shed his blood.

Oh blindness to the future! kindly giv'n,

That each may fill the circle mark'd by heav'n:

Who sees with equal eye, as God of all,

A hero perish, or a sparrow fall,

Atoms or systems into ruin hurl'd,
And now a bubble burst, and now a world.
Hope humbly then; with trembling pinions soar;
Wait the great teacher, death; and God adore.
What future bliss, he gives not thee to know,
But gives that hope to be thy blessing now.
Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never *is*, but always *to be* blest:
The soul, uneasy, and confin'd from home,
Rests and expatiates in a life to come.
Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, and hears him in the wind;
His soul proud science never taught to stray
Far as the solar walk, or milky way;
Yet simple nature to his hope has giv'n,
Behind the cloud-topt hill, an humbler heav'n;

Some safer world, in depth of woods embrac'd,
Some happier island in the watry waste,
Where slaves once more their native land behold,
No fiends torment, no Christians thirst for gold.
To *be*, contents his natural desire,
He asks no angel's wing, no seraph's fire;
But thinks, admitted to that equal sky,
His faithful dog shall bear him company.

4. Go, wiser thou! and, in thy scale of sense,
Weigh thy opinion against Providence;
Call imperfection what thou fancy'st such,
Say, here he gives too little, there too much;
Destroy all creatures for thy sport or gust,
Yet cry, if man's unhappy, God's unjust;
If man alone ingross not heav'n's high care,
Alone made perfect here, immortal there:

Snatch from his hand the balance and the rod,
Re-judge his justice, be the God of God.
In pride, in reas'ning pride, our error lies ;
All quit their sphere, and rush into the skies.
Pride still is aiming at the blest abodes,
Men would be angels, angels would be Gods.
Aspiring to be Gods, if angels fell,
Aspiring to be angels, men rebel ;
And who but wishes to invert the laws
Of *Order*, sins against th' Eternal Cause.

5. Ask for what end the heav'nly bodies shine?
Earth for whose use? Pride answers, " 'Tis for mine.
" For me kind Nature wakes her genial pow'r,
" Suckles each herb, and spreads out ev'ry flow'r;
" Annual for me, the grape, the rose renew
" The juice nectareous and the balmy dew ;

“ For me, the mine a thousand treasures brings;

“ For me, health gushes from a thousand springs;

“ Seas roll to waft me, suns to light me rise;

“ My footstool earth, my canopy the skies.”

But errs not nature from this gracious end,

From burning suns when livid deaths descend?

When earthquakes swallow, or when tempests
sweep

Towns to one grave, whole nations to the deep?

“ No (’tis reply’d) the first Almighty Cause

“ Acts not by partial, but by gen’ral laws;

“ Th’exceptions few; some change since all began,

“ And what created perfect?”---Why then man?

If the great end be human happiness,

Then nature deviates; and can man do less?

As much that end a constant course requires
Of show'rs and sunshine, as of man's desires:
As much eternal springs and cloudless skies,
As men for ever temp'rate, calm, and wise.
If plagues or earthquakes break not heav'n's design,
Why then a Borgia, or a Catiline?
Who knows but he, whose hand the lightning
forms,
Who heaves old Ocean, and who wings the storms,
Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?
From pride, from pride our very reas'ning springs;
Account for moral, as for nat'ral things:
Why charge we heav'n in those, in these acquit?
In both, to reason right, is to submit.

Better for us, perhaps, it might appear,
Were there all harmony, all virtue here;
That never air or ocean felt the wind;
That never passion discomposed the mind:
But *all* subsists by elemental strife;
And passions are the elements of life.
The gen'ral *Order*, since the whole began,
Is kept in nature, and is kept in man.

6. What would this man? Now upward will
 he soar,
And little less than angel, would be more;
Now looking downwards just as griev'd appears,
To want the strength of bulls, the fur of bears.
Made for his use, all creatures if we call,
Say what their use, had he the pow'rs of all?

Nature to these, without profusion kind,
The proper organs, proper pow'rs assign'd;
Each seeming want compensated of course,
Here with degrees of swiftness, there of force:
All in exact proportion to their state;
Nothing to add, and nothing to abate.
Each beast, each insect happy in its own;
Is heav'n unkind to man, and man alone?
Shall he alone, whom rational we call,
Be pleas'd with nothing, if not bless'd with all?
The bliss of man (could pride that blessing find)
Is not to act or think beyond mankind;
No pow'rs of body or of soul to share,
But what his nature and his state can bear,
Why has not man a microscopic eye?
For this plain reason, man is not a fly.

Say, what the use, were finer optics giv'n?
T' inspect a mite! not comprehend the heav'n.
Or touch, if tremblingly alive all o'er,
To smart and agonize at ev'ry pore?
Or quick effluvia darting thro' the brain?
Die of a rose in aromatic pain!
If nature thunder'd in his op'ning ears,
And stunn'd him with the music of the spheres,
How would he wish that heav'n had left him still
The whisp'ring zephyr and the purling rill!
Who finds not Providence all good and wise,
Alike in what it gives, and what denies?

7. Far as creation's ample range extends,
The scale of sensual, mental pow'rs ascends:
Mark how it mounts to man's imperial race,
From the green myriads in the peopled grass:

What modes of sight betwixt each wide extreme,
The mole's dim curtain, and the lynx's beam :
Of smell, the headlong lioness between,
And hound sagacious on the tainted green :
Of hearing, from the life that fills the flood,
To that which warbles thro' the vernal wood ?
The spider's touch, how exquisitely fine !
Feels at each thread, and lives along the line :
In the nice bee---what sense so subtly true
From pois'nous herbs extracts the healing dew ?
How instinct varies in the grov'ling swine,
Compar'd, half-reas'ning elephant, with thine !
'Twixt that and reason, what a nice barrier !
For ever sep'rate, yet for ever near !
Remembrance and reflection, how ally'd !
What thin partitions sense from thought divide !

And middle natures, how they long to join,
Yet never pass th' insuperable line!
Without this just gradation, could they be
Subjected, these to those, or all to thee?
The pow'rs of all subdu'd by thee alone,
Is not thy reason all these pow'rs in one?

8. See, thro' this air, this ocean, and this earth,
All matter quick, and bursting into birth.
Above, how high progressive life may go!
Around, how wide! how deep extend below!
Vast chain of being! which from God began;
Natures æthereal, human, angel, man,
Beast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see,
No glass can reach; from infinite to thee,
From thee to nothing.---On superior pow'rs
Were we to press, inferior might on ours;

Or in the full creation leave a void,
Where, one step broken, the great scale's destroy'd:
From nature's chain whatever link you strike,
Tenth, or ten thousandth, breaks the chain alike.

And, if each system in gradation roll,
Alike essential to th' amazing whole,
The least confusion but in one, not all
That system only, but the whole must fall.

Let earth, unbalanc'd, from her orbit fly,
Planets and suns run lawless thro' the sky;
Let ruling angels from their spheres be hurl'd,
Being on being wreck'd, and world on world;
Heav'n's whole foundations to their center nod,
And nature tremble to the throne of God.
All this dread *Order* break!--for whom? for thee!
Vile worm!--Oh madness! pride! impiety!

9. What if the foot, ordain'd the dust to tread,
Or hand, to toil, aspir'd to be the head?
What if the head, the eye, or ear repin'd
To serve mere engines to the ruling mind?
Just as absurd for any part to claim
To be another, in this gen'ral frame :
Just as absurd, to mourn the tasks or pains
The great directing *Mind* of *All* ordains.

All are but parts of one stupendous whole,
Whose body nature is, and God the soul ;
That, chang'd thro' all, and yet in all the same ;
Great in the earth, as in th' æthereal frame ;
Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,
Glow's in the stars, and blossoms in the trees,
Lives thro' all life, extends thro' all extent,
Spreads undivided, operates unspent ;

Breathes in our soul, informs our mortal part,
As full, as perfect in a hair as heart ;
As full, as perfect, in vile man that mourns,
As the rapt seraph that adores and burns:
To him no high, no low, no great, no small ;
He fills, he bounds, connects, and equals all.

10. Cease then, nor *Order* imperfection name :
Our proper bliss depends on what we blame.
Know thy own point : this kind, this due degree
Of blindness, weakness, heav'n bestows on thee.
Submit.---In this, or any other sphere,
Secure to be as blest as thou canst bear :
Safe in the hand of one disposing pow'r,
Or in the natal, or the mortal hour.
All nature is but art, unknown to thee ;
All chance, direction, which thou canst not see :

All discord, harmony not understood;
All partial evil, universal good :
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, *Whatever is, is right.*



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EPISTLE II.

ARGUMENT.

*Of the Nature and State of Man, with respect to Himself,
as an Individual.*

The business of Man not to pry into God, but to study himself....His middle nature; his powers and frailties....The limits of his capacity....The two principles of Man, Self-love and Reason, both necessary....Self-love the stronger, and why....Their end the same....The Passions, and their use....The predominant passion, and its force....Its necessity, in directing men to different purposes....Its providential use, in fixing our principle, and ascertaining our virtue....Virtue and vice joined in our mixed nature; the limits near, yet the things separate and evident: what is the office of Reason....How odious Vice is in itself, and how we deceive ourselves into it....That, however, the ends of Providence and general good are answered in our passions and imperfections....How usefully these are distributed to all orders of Men....How useful they are to Society, and to Individuals, in every state and every age of life.

KNOW then thyself, presume not God to scan;

The proper study of mankind is *Man*.

Plac'd on this isthmus of a middle state,

A Being darkly wise, and rudely great:

With too much knowledge for the sceptic side,

With too much weakness for the stoic's pride,

He hangs between ; in doubt to act, or rest ;
In doubt to deem himself a god, or beast ;
In doubt his mind or body to prefer ;
Born but to die, and reas'ning but to err ;
Alike in ignorance, his reason such,
Whether he thinks too little or too much ;
Chaos of thought and passion, all confus'd ;
Still by himself abus'd, or disabus'd ;
Created half to rise, and half to fall ;
Great lord of all things, yet a prey to all ;
Sole judge of truth, in endless error hurl'd :
The glory, jest, and riddle of the world !

Go, wond'rous creature ! mount where science
guides ;

Go, measure earth, weigh air, and state the tides ;

Instruct the planets in what orbs to run,
Correct old time, and regulate the sun ;
Go, soar with Plato, to th' empyreal sphere,
To the first good, first perfect, and first fair ;
Or tread the mazy round his followers trod ;
And, quitting sense, call imitating God ;
As eastern priests in giddy circles run,
And turn their heads to imitate the sun.
Go, teach Eternal Wisdom how to rule---
Then drop into thyself, and be a fool !

Superior beings, when of late they saw
A mortal man unfold all nature's law,
Admir'd such wisdom in an earthly shape,
And shew'd a Newton as we shew an ape.
Could he, whose rules the rapid comet bind,
Describe or fix one movement of his mind ?

Who saw its fires here rise and there descend,
Explain his own beginning or his end?
Alas, what wonder! man's superior part
Uncheck'd may rise, and climb from art to art;
But when his own great work is but begun,
What reason weaves, by passion is undone.

Trace science then with modesty thy guide;
First strip off all her equipage of pride;
Deduct what is but vanity, or dress,
Or learning's luxury, or idleness;
Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain,
Mere curious pleasure, or ingenious pain;
Expunge the whole, or lop th' excrescent parts
Of all our vices have created arts;
Then see how little the remaining sum,
Which serv'd the past, and must the times to come.

2. Two principles in human nature reign,
Self-love, to urge, and reason, to restrain ;
Nor this a good, nor that a bad we call,
Each works its end, to move or govern all :
And to their proper operation still
Ascribe all good, to their improper, ill.

Self-love, the spring of motion, acts the soul ;
Reason's comparing balance rules the whole.
Man, but for that, no action could attend,
And, but for this, were active to no end :
Fix'd like a plant on his peculiar spot,
To draw nutrition, propagate, and rot ;
Or, meteor-like, flame lawless thro' the void,
Destroying others, by himself destroy'd.

Most strength the moving principle requires ;
Active its task, it prompts, impels, inspires :

Sedate and quiet the comparing lies,
Form'd but to check, delib'rate, and advise.
Self-love still stronger, as its object's nigh ;
Reason's at distance, and in prospect lie :
That sees immediate good by present sense ;
Reason, the future and the consequence.
Thicker than arguments temptations throng,
At best more watchful this, but that more strong.
The action of the stronger to suspend,
Reason still use, to reason still attend.
Attention, habit and experience gains ;
Each strengthens reason, and self-love restrains.
Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
More studious to divide than to unite ;
And grace and virtue, sense and reason split,
With all the rash dexterity of wit.

Wits, just like fools, at war about a name,
Have full as oft no meaning, or the same.
Self-love and reason to one end aspire,
Pain their aversion, pleasure their desire;
But greedy that, its object would devour,
This taste the honey, and not wound the flow'r:
Pleasure, or wrong or rightly understood,
Our greatest evil, or our greatest good.

3. Modes of self-love the passions we may call;
'Tis real good, or seeming, moves them all:
But since not ev'ry good we can divide,
And reason bids us for our own provide,
Passions, tho' selfish, if their means be fair,
List under reason, and deserve her care;
Those that, imparted, court a nobler aim,
Exalt their kind, and take some virtue's name.

In lazy apathy let stoics boast
Their virtue fix'd; 'tis fix'd as in a frost;
Contracted all, retiring to the breast;
But strength of mind is exercise, not rest:
The rising tempest puts in act the soul,
Parts it may ravage, but preserves the whole.
On life's vast ocean diversely we sail,
Reason the card, but passion is the gale;
Nor God alone in the still calm we find,
He mounts the storm, and walks upon the wind.

Passions, like elements, tho' born to fight,
Yet, mix'd and soften'd, in his work unite:
These, 'tis enough to temper and employ;
But what composes man, can man destroy?
Suffice that reason keep to nature's road,
Subject, compound them, follow her and God.

Love, hope, and joy, fair Pleasure's smiling train,
Hate, fear, and grief, the family of Pain,
These mix'd with art, and to due bounds confin'd,
Make and maintain the balance of the mind :
The lights and shades, whose well-accorded strife,
Gives all the strength and colour of our life.

Pleasures are ever in our hands or eyes;
And when in act they cease, in prospect rise :
Present to grasp, and future still to find,
The whole employ of body and of mind.
All spread their charms, but charm not all alike;
On diff'rent senses diff'rent objects strike :
Hence diff'rent passions more or less inflame,
As strong or weak the organs of the frame;
And hence one *master passion* in the breast,
Like Aaron's serpent, swallows up the rest.

As man, perhaps, the moment of his breath,
Receives the lurking principle of death ;
The young disease, that must subdue at length,
Grows with his growth, and strengthens with
his strength :

So, cast and mingled with his very frame,
The mind's disease, its *ruling passion* came ;
Each vital humour which should feed the whole,
Soon flows to this, in body and in soul :
Whatever warms the heart, or fills the head,
As the mind opens, and its functions spread,
Imagination plies her dang'rous art,
And pours it all upon the peccant part.

Nature its mother, habit is its nurse ;
Wit, spirit, faculties, but make it worse ;

Reason itself but gives it edge and pow'r;
As heav'n's blest beam turns vinegar more sour.

We, wretched subjects though to lawful sway,
In this weak queen, some fav'rite still obey;
Ah! if she lend not arms, as well as rules,
What can she more than tell us we are fools?
Teach us to mourn our nature, not to mend,
A sharp accuser, but a helpless friend!
Or from a judge turn pleader, to persuade
The choice we make, or justify it made;
Proud of an easy conquest all along,
She but removes weak passions for the strong:
So, when small humours gather to a gout,
The doctor fancies he has driv'n them out.

Yes, nature's road must ever be preferr'd;
Reason is here no guide, but still a guard;

'Tis hers to rectify, not overthrow,
And treat this passion more as friend than foe:
A mightier pow'r the strong direction sends,
And sev'ral men impels to sev'ral ends:
Like varying winds, by other passions tost,
This drives them constant to a certain coast.
Let pow'r or knowledge, gold or glory, please,
Or (oft more strong than all) the love of ease;
Thro' life 'tis follow'd, ev'n at life's expence---
The merchant's toil, the sage's indolence,
The monk's humility, the hero's pride,
All, all alike, find reason on their side.

Th' Eternal Art, educing good from ill,
Grafts on this passion our best principle:
'Tis thus the mercury of man is fix'd,
Strong grows the virtue with his nature mix'd;

The dross cements what else were too refin'd,
And in one int'rest body acts with mind.

As fruits, ungrateful to the planter's care,
On savage stocks inserted learn to bear ;
The surest virtues thus from passions shoot,
Wild nature's vigour working at the root.
What crops of wit and honesty appear
From spleen, from obstinacy, hate, or fear!
See anger, zeal and fortitude supply ;
Ev'n av'rice, prudence ; sloth, philosophy ;
Lust, thro' some certain strainers well refin'd,
Is gentle love, and charms all womankind ;
Envy, to which th' ignoble mind's a slave,
Is emulation in the learn'd or brave ;
Nor virtue, male or female, can we name,
But what will grow on pride, or grow on shame.

Thus nature gives us (let it check our pride)
The virtue nearest to our vice ally'd:
Reason the bias turns to good from ill,
And Nero reigns a Titus if he will.
The fiery soul abhorr'd in Catiline,
In Decius charms, in Curtius is divine:
The same ambition can destroy or save,
And makes a patriot as it makes a knave.

This light and darkness in our chaos join'd,
What shall divide? the god within the mind.

Extremes in nature equal ends produce,
In man they join to some mysterious use:
Tho' each by turns the other's bounds invade,
As, in some well-wrought picture light and shade;
And oft so mix, the difference is too nice
Where ends the virtue, or begins the vice,

Fools! who from hence into the notion fall,
That vice or virtue there is none at all.
If white and black blend, soften, and unite
A thousand ways, is there no black or white?
Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain;
'Tis to mistake them costs the time and pain.

Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.
But where th' extreme of vice, was ne'er agreed:
Ask where's the north? at York, 'tis on the Tweed;
In Scotland at the Orcades; and there,
At Greenland, Zembla, or the Lord knows where.
No creature owns it in the first degree,
But thinks his neighbour farther gone than he;

Ev'n those who dwell beneath its very zone,
Or never feel the rage, or never own;
What happier natures shrink at with affright,
The hard inhabitant contends is right.

Virtuous and vicious ev'ry man must be,
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree:
The rogue and fool, by fits, is fair and wise;
And ev'n the best, by fits, what they despise.
'Tis but by parts we follow good or ill;
For, vice or virtue, self directs it still;
Each individual seeks a sev'ral goal;
But heav'n's great view is one, and that the whole.
That counterworks each folly and caprice;
That disappoints th' effects of ev'ry vice;
That, happy frailties to all ranks apply'd---
Shame to the virgin, to the matron pride,

Fear to the statesman, rashness to the chief,
To kings presumption, and to crowds belief:
That virtue's ends from vanity can raise,
Which seeks no int'rest, no reward but praise;
And builds on wants, and on defects of mind,
The joy, the peace, the glory of mankind.

Heav'n forming each on other to depend,
A master, or a servant, or a friend,
Bids each on other for assistance call,
Till one man's weakness grows the strength of all.
Wants, frailties, passions, closer still ally
The common int'rest, or endear the tie.
To these we owe true friendship, love sincere,
Each home-felt joy that life inherits here;
Yet from the same we learn, in its decline,
Those joys, those loves, those int'rests to resign;

Taught half by reason, half by mere decay,
To welcome death, and calmly pass away.

Whate'er the passion, knowledge, fame, or pelf.
Not one will change his neighbour with himself.
The learn'd is happy nature to explore,
The fool is happy that he knows no more ;
The rich is happy in the plenty giv'n,
The poor contents him with the care of heav'n.
See the blind beggar dance, the cripple sing,
The sot a hero, lunatic a king ;
The starving chemist in his golden views
Supremely blest, the poet in his muse.

See some strange comfort ev'ry state attend,
And pride bestow'd on all, a common friend :
See some fit passion ev'ry age supply,
Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

Behold the child, by nature's kindly law,
Pleas'd with a rattle, tickled with a straw:
Some livelier plaything gives his youth delight,
A little louder, but as empty quite:
Scarfs, garters, gold, amuse his riper stage,
And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age:
Pleas'd with this bauble still, as that before;
'Till tir'd he sleeps, and life's poor play is o'er.
Mean-while opinion gilds with varying rays
Those painted clouds that beautify our days;
Each want of happiness by hope supply'd,
And each vacuity of sense by pride:
These build as fast as knowledge can destroy;
In folly's cup still laughs the bubble, joy;
One prospect lost, another still we gain;
And not a vanity is given in vain:

Ev'n mean self-love becomes, by force divine,
The scale to measure others wants by thine.
See! and confess, one comfort still must rise;
'Tis this, tho' man's a fool, yet God *is* wise.





EPISTLE III.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to Society.

The whole universe one system of society....Nothing made wholly for itself, nor yet wholly for another....The happiness of animals mutual....Reason or instinct operates alike to the good of each individual....Reason or instinct operates also to society in all animals....How far society is carried by instinct....How much farther by reason....Of that which is called the state of nature....Reason instructed by instinct in the invention of arts, and in the forms of society....Origin of political societies....Origin of monarchy....Patriarchal government....Origin of true religion and government, from the same principle of love....Origin of superstition and tyranny, from the same principle of fear....The influence of self-love operating to the social and public good....Restoration of true religion and government on their first principle....Mixed government....Various forms of each, and the true end of all.

HERE then we rest : “ the Universal Cause

“ Acts to one end, but acts by various laws.”

In all the madness of superfluous health,

The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth,

Let this great truth be present night and day :

But most be present, if we preach or pray.

Look round our world, behold the chain of love
Combining all below and all above.
See plastic Nature working to this end,
The single atoms each to other tend,
Attract, attracted to, the next in place
Form'd and impell'd its neighbour to embrace.
See matter next, with various life endu'd,
Press to one center still, the gen'ral good.
See dying vegetables life sustain,
See life dissolving vegetate again:
All forms that perish other forms supply,
(By turns we catch the vital breath and die)
Like bubbles on the sea of matter borne,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return.
Nothing is foreign; parts relate to whole;
One all-extending, all-preserving soul

Connects each being, greatest with the least;
Made beast in aid of man, and man of beast;
All serv'd, all serving: nothing stands alone;
The chain holds on, and where it ends, unknown.

Has God, thou fool! work'd solely for thy good,
Thy joy, thy pastime, thy attire, thy food?
Who for thy table feeds the wanton fawn,
For him as kindly spreads the flow'ry lawn:
Is it for thee the lark ascends and sings?
Joy tunes his voice, joy elevates his wings.
Is it for thee the linnet pours his throat?
Loves of his own and raptures swell the note.
The bounding steed you pompously bestride,
Shares with his lord the pleasure and the pride.
Is thine alone the seed that strews the plain?
The birds of heav'n shall vindicate their grain.

Thine the full harvest of the golden year?
Part pays, and justly, the deserving steer:
The hog, that plows not, nor obeys thy call,
Lives on the labours of this lord of all.

Know, Nature's children all divide her care;
The fur that warms a monarch warm'd a bear.
While man exclaims, "See all things for my use!"
"See man for mine!" replies a pamper'd goose:
And just as short of reason he must fall,
Who thinks all made for one, not one for all.

Grant that the pow'rful still the weak controul;
Be man the wit and tyrant of the whole:
Nature that tyrant checks;---he only knows,
And helps another creature's wants and woes.
Say, will the falcon, stooping from above,
Smit with her varying plumage, spare the dove?

Admires the jay the insect's gilded wings?
Or hears the hawk when Philomela sings?
Man cares for all: to birds he gives his woods,
To beasts his pastures, and to fish his floods.
For some his int'rest prompts him to provide,
For more his pleasure, yet for more his pride:
All feed on one vain patron, and enjoy
Th' extensive blessing of his luxury.
That very life his learned hunger craves,
He saves from famine, from the savage saves;
Nay, feasts the animal he dooms his feast,
And, 'till he ends the being, makes it blest;
Which sees no more the stroke, nor feels the pain,
Than favour'd man, by touch ethereal slain.
The creature had his feast of life before,
Thou too must perish, when thy feast is o'er!

To each unthinking being, heav'n a friend,
Gives not the useless knowledge of its end :
To man imparts it ; but with such a view
As, while he dreads it, makes him hope it too ;
The hour conceal'd, and so remote the fear,
Death still draws nearer, never seeming near.
Great standing miracle ! that heav'n assign'd
Its only thinking thing this turn of mind.

2. Whether with reason or with instinct blest,
Know, all enjoy the pow'r which suits them best ;
To bliss alike by that direction tend,
And find the means proportion'd to their end.
Say, where full instinct is th' unerring guide,
What pope or council can they need beside ?
Reason, however able, cool at best,
Cares not for service, or but serves when prest,

Stays till we call, and then not often near;
But honest instinct comes a volunteer,
Sure never to o'er-shoot, but just to hit;
While still too wide or short is human wit;
Sure by quick nature happiness to gain,
Which heavier reason labours at in vain.
This too serves always, reason never long;
One must go right, the other may go wrong
See then the acting and comparing pow'rs
One in their nature, which are two in ours;
And reason raise o'er instinct as you can,
In this 'tis God directs, in that 'tis man.

Who taught the nations of the field and wood
To shun their poison, and to chuse their food?
Prescient the tides or tempests to withstand,
Build on the wave, or arch beneath the sand?

Who made the spider parallels design,
Sure as Demoivre, without rule or line?
Who bids the stork, Columbus-like, explore
Heav'ns not his own, and worlds unknown before?
Who calls the council, states the certain day,
Who forms the phalanx, and who points the way?

3. God, in the nature of each being, founds
Its proper bliss, and sets its proper bounds:
But as he fram'd a whole, the whole to bless,
On mutual wants built mutual happiness:
So from the first, eternal *Order* ran,
And creature link'd to creature, man to man.
Whate'er of life all quick'ning ether keeps,
Or breathes thro' air, or shoots beneath the deeps,
Or pours profuse on earth, one nature feeds
The vital flame, and swells the genial seeds.

Not man alone, but all that roam the wood,
Or wing the sky, or roll along the flood,
Each loves itself, but not itself alone,
Each sex desires alike, 'till two are one.
Nor ends the pleasure with the fierce embrace;
They love themselves a third time in their race.
Thus beast and bird their common charge attend,
The mothers nurse it, and the sires defend;
The young dismiss'd, to wander earth or air,
There stops the instinct, and there ends the care:
The link dissolves, each seeks a fresh embrace,
Another love succeeds, another race.
A longer care man's helpless kind demands;
That longer care contracts more lasting bands:
Reflection, reason, still the ties improve,
At once extend the int'rest, and the love;

With choice we fix, with sympathy we burn;
Each virtue in each passion takes its turn;
And still new needs, new helps, new habits rise,
That graft benevolence on charities.
Still as one brood, and as another rose,
These nat'ral love maintain'd, habitual those:
The last scarce ripen'd into perfect man,
Saw helpless him from whom their life began:
Mem'ry and force-cast just returns engage,
That pointed back to youth, this on to age;
While pleasure, gratitude, and hope, combin'd,
Still spread the int'rest, and preserv'd the kind.

4. Nor think in *Nature's state* they blindly trod;
The state of nature was the reign of God:
Self-love and social at her birth began,
Union the bond of all things, and of man.

Pride then was not; nor arts, that pride to aid;
Man walk'd with beast, joint tenant of the shade;
The same his table, and the same his bed;
No murder cloath'd him, and no murder fed.
In the same temple---the resounding wood---
All vocal beings hymn'd their equal God:
The shrine with gore unstain'd, with gold undrest,
Unbrib'd, unbloody, stood the blameless priest:
Heav'n's attribute was *universal care*,
And man's prerogative to *rule*, but *share*.
Ah! how unlike the man of times to come!
Of half that live the butcher and the tomb;
Who, foe to nature, hears the gen'ral groan,
Murders their species, and betrays his own.
But just disease to luxury succeeds,
And ev'ry death its own avenger breeds;

The fury-passions from that blood began,
And turn'd on man a fiercer savage---man.

See him from nature rising slow to art!---
To copy instinct then was reason's part;
Thus then to man the voice of Nature spake---
“ Go, from the creatures thy instruction take :
“ Learn from the birds what food the thickets yield;
“ Learn from the beasts the physic of the field ;
“ Thy arts of building from the bee receive ;
“ Learn of the mole to plow, the worm to weave ;
“ Learn of the little nautilus to sail,
“ Spread the thin oar, and catch the driving gale.
“ Here too all forms of social union find,
“ And hence let reason, late, instruct mankind :
“ Here subterranean works and cities see ;
“ There towns aerial on the waving tree.

“ Learn each small people’s genius, policies,
“ ‘The ant’s republic, and the realm of bees :
“ How those in common all their wealth bestow,
“ And anarchy without confusion know ;
“ And these for ever, tho’ a monarch reign,
“ Their sep’rate cells and properties maintain.
“ Mark what unvary’d laws preserve each state ;
“ Laws wise as nature, and as fix’d as fate.
“ In vain thy reason finer webs shall draw,
“ Entangle justice in her net of law,
“ And right, too rigid, harden into wrong ;
“ Still for the strong too weak, the weak too strong ;
“ Yet go, and thus o’er all the creatures sway,
“ Thus let the wiser make the rest obey ;
“ And for those arts mere instinct could afford,
“ Be crown’d as monarchs, or as gods ador’d.”

5. Great Nature spoke; observant man obey'd;
Cities were built, societies were made:
Here rose one little state; another near
Grew by like means, and join'd, thro' love or fear.
Did here the trees with ruddier burdens bend,
And there the streams in purer rills descend?
What war could ravish, commerce could bestow,
And he return'd a friend, who came a foe.
Converse and love mankind might strongly draw,
When love was liberty, and nature law.
Thus states were form'd; the name of king unknown;
Till common int'rest plac'd the sway in one.
'Twas *virtue only* (or in arts or arms,
Diffusing blessings, or averting harms)

The same which in a sire the sons obey'd,
A prince the father of a people made.

6. Till then, by nature crown'd, each patriarch
sate,
King, priest, and parent of his growing state;
On him, their second providence, they hung,
Their law his eye, their oracle his tongue.
He from the wand'ring furrow call'd the food,
Taught to command the fire, controul the flood,
Draw forth the monsters of th' abyss profound,
Or fetch th' aerial eagle to the ground.
Till drooping, sick'ning, dying, they began,
Whom they rève'd as God, to mourn as man:
Then, looking up from sire to sire, explor'd
One great First Father, and that First ador'd.

Or plain tradition, that this all begun,
Convey'd unbroken faith from sire to son;
The worker from the work distinct was known,
And simple reason never sought but one:
Ere wit oblique had broke that steady light,
Man, like his maker, saw that all was right;
To virtue, in the paths of pleasure trod,
And own'd a father when he own'd a God.
Love all the faith and all th' allegiance then;
For nature knew no right divine in men,
No ill could fear in God; and understood
A Sov'reign Being but a sov'reign good.
True faith, true policy, united ran,
That was but love of God, and this of man.

Who first taught souls enslav'd, and realms
undone,
Th' enormous faith of many made for one;
That proud exception to all nature's laws,
T' invert the world, and counterwork its cause?
Force first made conquest, and that conquest law;
Till Superstition taught the tyrant awe,
Then shar'd the tyranny, then lent it aid,
And gods of conqu'rors, slaves of subjects made:
She 'midst the light'ning's blaze, and thunder's
sound,
When rock'd the mountains, and when groan'd
the ground,
She taught the weak to bend, the proud to pray,
To pow'r unseen, and mightier far than they:

She, from the rending earth and bursting skies,
Saw gods descend, and fiends infernal rise:
Here fix'd the dreadful, there the blest abodes;
Fear made her devils, and weak hope her gods;
Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust;
Such as the souls of cowards might conceive,
And, form'd like tyrants, tyrants would believe.
Zeal then, not charity, became the guide;
And hell was built on spite, and heav'n on pride.
Then sacred seem'd th' etherial vault no more;
Altars grew marble then, and reek'd with gore:
Then first the flamen tasted living food;
Next his grim idol smear'd with human blood;

With heav'n's own thunders shook the world
below,

And play'd the god an engine on his foe.

So drives self-love, thro' just, and thro' unjust,
To one man's pow'r, ambition, lucre, lust:

The same self-love, in all, becomes the cause
Of what restrains him---government and laws.

For what one likes, if others like as well,
What serves one will, when many wills rebel;

How shall he keep, what, sleeping or awake,
A weaker may surprize, a stronger take?

His safety must his liberty restrain:
All join to guard what each desires to gain.

Forc'd into virtue thus by self-defence,
Ev'n kings learnt justice and benevolence:

Self-love forsook the path it first pursu'd,
And found the private in the public good.

'Twas then, the studious head or gen'rous mind,
Follow'r of God or friend of human-kind,
Poet or patriot, rose but to restore
The faith and moral nature gave before;
Relum'd her ancient light, not kindled new;
If not God's image, yet his shadow drew:
Taught power's due use to people and to kings;
Taught nor to slack, nor strain its tender strings,
The less, or greater, set so justly true,
That touching one must strike the other too;
Till jarring int'rests of themselves create
Th' according music of a well-mix'd state.
Such is the world's great harmony, that springs
From order, union, full consent of things:

Where small and great, where weak and mighty
made

To serve, not suffer, strengthen, not invade;
More pow'rful each as needful to the rest,
And, in proportion as it blesses, blest;
Draw to one point, and to one center bring
Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king.

For forms of government let fools contest;
Whate'er is best administer'd is best:
For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;
His can't be wrong whose life is in the right:
In faith and hope the world will disagree,
But all mankind's concern is charity:
All must be false that thwart this one great end;
And, all of God, that bless mankind or mend.

Man, like the gen'rous vine, supported lives ;
The strength he gains is from th' embrace he gives.
On their own axis as the planets run,
Yet make at once their circle round the sun ;
So two consistent motions act the soul ;
And one regards itself, and one the whole.

Thus God and nature link'd the general frame,
And bade self-love and social be the same.





EPISTLE IV.

ARGUMENT.

Of the Nature and State of Man with respect to Happiness.

False notions of happiness, philosophical and popular....It is the end of all men, and attainable by all....God intends happiness to be equal; and to be so, it must be social; since all particular happiness depends on general, and since he governs by general, not particular, laws....As it is necessary for order, and the peace and welfare of society, that external goods should be unequal, happiness is not made to consist in these....But, notwithstanding that inequality, the balance of happiness among mankind is kept even by Providence, by the two passions of hope and fear....What the happiness of individuals is, as far as is consistent with the constitution of this world; and that the good man has here the advantage....The error of imputing to virtue what are only the calamities of nature or of fortune....The folly of expecting that God should alter his general laws in favour of particulars....That we are not judges who are good; but that, whoever they are, they must be happiest....That external goods are not the proper rewards, but often inconsistent with, or destructive of, virtue....That even these can make no man happy without virtue: instanced in riches, honours, nobility, greatness, fame, and superior talents; with pictures of human infelicity in men possessed of them all....That virtue only constitutes a happiness whose object is universal, and whose prospect eternal....That the perfection of virtue and happiness consists in a conformity to the order of Providence here, and a resignation to it here and hereafter.

○ HAPPINESS! our being's end and aim!

Good, Pleasure, Ease, Content, whate'er thy name;

That something still which prompts th'eternal sigh,

For which we bear to live, or dare to die;

Which still so near us, yet beyond us lies,
O'erlook'd, seen double, by the fool, and wise.
Plant of celestial seed! if dropt below,
Say, in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow?
Fair op'ning to some court's propitious shine,
Or deep with di'monds in the flaming mine?
Twin'd with the wreaths Parnassian laurels yield,
Or reap'd in iron harvests of the field?
Where grows? where grows it not? If vain our toil,
We ought to blame the culture, not the soil:
Fix'd to no spot is happiness sincere,
'Tis no where to be found, or ev'ry where:
'Tis never to be bought, but always free,
And fled from monarchs, St. John, dwells with thee.
Ask of the learn'd the way? the learn'd are blind;
This bids to serve, and that to shun mankind;

Some place the bliss in action, some in ease,
Those call it pleasure, and contentment these;
Some sunk to beasts, find pleasure end in pain;
Some swell'd to Gods, confess ev'n virtue vain;
Or indolent, to each extreme they fall,
To trust in ev'ry thing, or doubt of all.

Who thus define it, say they more or less
Than this, that happiness is happiness?

Take Nature's path, and mad Opinion's leave;
All states can reach it, and all heads conceive;
Obvious her goods, in no extreme they dwell;
There needs but thinking right, and meaning well;
And mourn our various portions as we please,
Equal is common sense, and common ease.

Remember, man, "the universal cause
"Acts not by partial, but by gen'ral laws;"

And makes what happiness we justly call
Subsist, not in the good of one, but all.

There's not a blessing individuals find,
But some way leans and hearkens to the kind,
No bandit fierce, no tyrant mad with pride,
No cavern'd hermit rests self-satisfy'd:
Who most to shun or hate mankind pretend,
Seek an admirer, or would fix a friend:
Abstract what others feel, what others think,
All pleasures sicken, and all glories sink:
Each has his share; and who would more obtain,
Shall find, the pleasure pays not half the pain.

Order is heav'n's first law; and this confest,
Some are, and must be, greater than the rest,
More rich, more wise; but who infers from hence
That such are happier, shocks all common sense,

Heav'n to mankind impartial we confess,
If all are equal in their happiness:
But mutual wants this happiness increase;
All nature's diff'rence keeps all nature's peace.
Condition, circumstance is not the thing;
Bliss is the same in subject or in king---
In who obtain defence, or who defend,
In him who is, or him who finds a friend:
Heav'n breathes thro' ev'ry member of the whole
One common blessing, as one common soul.
But fortune's gifts if each alike possess,
And each were equal, must not all contest?
If then to all men happiness was meant,
God in externals could not place content.

Fortune her gifts may variously dispose,
And these be happy call'd, unhappy those;

But heaven's just balance equal will appear,
While those are plac'd in *hope*, and these in *fear*:
Not present good or ill, the joy or curse,
But future views of better or of worse.

Oh, sons of earth! attempt ye still to rise,
By mountains pil'd on mountains, to the skies?
Heav'n still with laughter the vain toil surveys,
And buries madmen in the heaps they raise.

Know, all the good that individuals find,
Or God and nature meant to mere mankind,
Reason's whole pleasure, all the joys of sense,
Lie in three words, *health*, *peace*, and *competence*.
But health consists with temperance alone;
And peace, O Virtue! peace is all thy own.
The good or bad the gifts of fortune gain;
But these less taste them as they worse obtain.

Say, in pursuit of profit or delight,
Who risk the most, that take wrong means or right?
Of vice or virtue, whether blest or curs'd,
Which meets contempt, or which compassion first?
Count all the advantage prosp'rous vice attains,
'Tis but what virtue flies from and disdains :
And grant the bad what happiness they wou'd,
One they must want, which is to pass for good.
Oh, blind to truth, and God's whole scheme below,
Who fancy bliss to vice, to virtue woe!
Who sees and follows that great scheme the best,
Best knows the blessing, and will most be blest.
But fools the good alone unhappy call,
For ills or accidents that chance to all.
See *Falkland* dies, the virtuous and the just !
See god-like *Turenne* prostrate on the dust !

See *Sidney* bleeds amid the martial strife !
Was this their virtue, or contempt of life ?
Say, was it virtue, more tho' heav'n ne'er gave,
Lamented *Digby* ! sunk thee to the grave ?
Tell me, if virtue made the son expire,
Why, full of days and honour, lives the sire ?
Why drew *Marseilles*' good Bishop purer breath,
When nature sicken'd, and each gale was death ?
Or why so long (in life if long can be)
Lent heav'n a parent to the poor and me ?
What makes all physical or moral ill ?
There deviates nature, and here wanders will.
God sends not ill, if rightly understood ;
Or partial ill is universal good,
Or change admits, or nature lets it fall,
Short, and but rare, till man improv'd it all.

We just as wisely might of heav'n complain
That righteous Abel was destroy'd by Cain,
As that the virtuous son is ill at ease
When his lewd father gave the dire disease.
Think we like some weak prince, th' Eternal Cause,
Prone for his fav'rites to reverse his laws?

Shall burning Etna, if a sage requires,
Forget to thunder, and recal her fires?
On air or sea new motions be impress'd,
O blameless Bethel! to relieve thy breast?
When the loose mountain trembles from on high,
Shall gravitation cease, if you go by?
Or some old temple nodding to its fall,
For Chartres' head reserve the hanging wall?

But still this world (so fitted for the knave)
Contents us not. A better shall we have?

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A kingdom of the just then let it be :
But first consider how those just agree.
The good must merit God's peculiar care ;
But who but God can tell us who they are ?
One thinks on Calvin heaven's own spirit fell ;
Another deems him instrument of hell :
If Calvin feel heaven's blessing, or its rod,
This cries there is, and that there is no God.
What shocks one part will edify the rest,
Nor with one system can they all be blest.
The very best will variously incline,
And what rewards your virtue punish mine.
Whatever is, is right---This world, 'tis true,
Was made for Cæsar---but for Titus too :
And which most blest? who chain'd his country,
say,
Or he whose virtue sigh'd to lose a day ?

“But sometimes virtue starves, while vice is fed.”

What then?---Is the reward of virtue bread?

That, vice may merit---’tis the price of toil;

The knave deserves it, when he tills the soil;

The knave deserves it when he tempts the main,

Where folly fights for kings, or dives for gain.

The good man may be weak---be indolent;

Nor is his claim to plenty, but content.

But grant him riches, your demand is o’er?

“No---shall the good want health, the good want
pow’r?”

Add health, and pow’r, and ev’ry earthly thing:

“Why bounded pow’r? why private? why no
king?”

“Nay, why external for internal giv’n?”

“Why is not man a god, and earth a heav’n?”

Who ask and reason thus, will scarce conceive
God gives enough, while he has more to give :
Immense the pow'r, immense were the demand ;
Say, at what part of nature will they stand ?

What nothing earthly gives, or can destroy,
The soul's calm sun-shine, and the heart-felt joy,
Is Virtue's prize :---a better would you fix ?

Then give Humility a coach and six,
Justice a conq'ror's sword, or Truth a gown,
Or public Spirit its great cure, a crown.

Weak, foolish man ! will heav'n reward us there,
With the same trash mad mortals wish for here ?

The boy and man an individual makes,

Yet sigh'st thou now for apples and for cakes ?

Go, like the Indian, in another life

Expect thy dog, thy bottle, and thy wife ;

As well as dream such trifles are assign'd,
As toys and empires, for a godlike mind.
Rewards, that either would to virtue bring
No joy, or be destructive of the thing :
How oft by these at sixty are undone
The virtues of a saint at twenty-one !
To whom can riches give repute or trust,
Content or pleasure, but the good and just ?
Judges and senates have been bought for gold,
Esteem and love were never to be sold.
Oh fool ! to think God hates the worthy mind,
The lover and the love of human kind,
Whose life is healthful, and whose conscience clear,
Because he wants a thousand pounds a year.
Honour and shame from no condition rise ;
Act well your part, there all the honour lies.

Fortune in men has some small diff'rence made,
One flaunts in rags, one flutters in brocade;
The cobbler apron'd, and the parson gown'd,
The friar hooded, and the monarch crown'd.
"What differ more (you cry) than crown and
cowl?"

I'll tell you, friend---a wise man and a fool.
You'll find, if once the monarch acts the monk,
Or, cobbler-like, the parson will be drunk,
Worth makes the man, and want of it, the fellow;
The rest is all but leather or prunello.

Stuck o'er with titles, and hung round with
strings,
That thou may'st be by kings, or whores of kings.
Boast the pure blood of an illustrious race,
In quiet flow from Lucrece to Lucrece:

But by your father's worth if your's you rate,
Count me those only who were good and great.
Go---if your ancient but ignoble blood
Has crept thro' scoundrels ever since the flood,
Go, and pretend your family is young;
Nor own your fathers have been fools so long.
What can ennoble sots, or slaves, or cowards?
Alas! not all the blood of all the *Howards*.

Look next on greatness; say where greatness lies.
"Where but among the heroes, and the wise?"
Heroes are much the same, the point's agreed,
From Macedonia's madman to the Swede;
The whole strange purpose of their lives, to find
Or make an enemy of all mankind!
Not one looks backward, onward still he goes,
Yet ne'er looks forward further than his nose.

No less alike the politic and wise ;
All sly slow things, with circumspective eyes :
Men in their loose unguarded hours they take,
Not that themselves are wise, but others weak.
But grant that those can conquer, these can cheat,
'Tis phrase absurd to call a villain great :
Who wickedly is wise, or madly brave,
Is but the more a fool, the more a knave.
Who noble ends by noble means obtains,
Or failing, smiles in exile or in chains,
Like good Aurelius let him reign, or bleed
Like Socrates, that man is great indeed.
What's fame ? a fancy'd life in others breath ;
A thing beyond us, e'en before our death.
Just what you hear, you have ; and what's un-
known,
The same (my Lord) if Tully's or your own.

All that we feel of it begins and ends
In the small circle of our foes or friends;
To all beside as much an empty shade
An Eugene living, as a Cæsar dead;
Alike or when or where they shone or shine,
Or on the Rubicon, or on the Rhine.
A wit's a feather, and a chief a rod;
An honest man's the noblest work of God.
Fame but from death a villain's name can save,
As justice tears his body from the grave;
When what t'oblivion better were resign'd,
Is hung on high to poison half mankind.
All fame is foreign, but of true desert,
Plays round the head, but comes not to the heart:
One self-approving hour whole years outweighs
Of stupid starers and of loud huzzas;

And more true joy Marcellus exil'd feels,
Than Cæsar with a senate at his heels.

In parts superior what advantage lies?
Tell (for you can) what is it to be wise?
'Tis but to know how little can be known;
To see all others faults, and feel our own:
Condemn'd in bus'ness or in arts to drudge,
Without a second, or without a judge:
Truths would you teach, or save a sinking land?
All fear, none aid you, and few understand.
Painful pre-eminence! yourself to view
Above life's weakness, and its comforts too.

Bring then these blessings to a strict account,
Make fair deductions; see to what they mount;
How much of other each is sure to cost;
How each for other oft is wholly lost;

How inconsistent greater goods with these ;
How sometimes life is risk'd, and always ease :
Think, and if still the things thy envy call,
Say, wouldst thou be the man to whom they fall?
To sigh for ribbands if thou art so silly,
Mark how they grace Lord Umbra, or Sir Billy.
Is yellow dirt the passion of thy life ?
Look but on Gripus, or on Gripus' wife.
If parts allure thee, think how Bacon shin'd,
The wisest, brightest, meanest of mankind :
Or ravish'd with the whistling of a name,
See Cromwell, damn'd to everlasting fame !
If all, united, thy ambition call,
From ancient story learn to scorn them all.
There, in the rich, the honour'd, fam'd, and great,
See the false scale of happiness complete !

In hearts of kings, or arms of queens who lay,
How happy those to ruin, these betray !
Mark by what wretched steps their glory grows,
From dirt and sea-weed as proud Venice rose.
In each how guilt and greatness equal ran,
And all that rais'd the *hero* sunk the *man* :
Now Europe's laurels on their brows behold,
But stain'd with blood, or ill-exchang'd for gold :
Then see them broke with toils, or sunk in ease,
Or infamous for plunder'd provinces.
Oh wealth ill-fated ! which no act of fame
E'er taught to shine, or sanctified from shame !
What greater bliss attends their close of life ?
Some greedy minion, or imperious wife,
The trophy'd arches, story'd halls invade,
And haunt their slumbers in the pompous shade.

Alas! not dazzled with their noontide ray,
Compute the morn and ev'ning to the day;
The whole amount of that enormous fame,
A tale, that blends their glory with their shame!

Know then this truth (enough for man to know)
“Virtue alone is happiness below.”

The only point where human bliss stands still,
And tastes the good without the fall to ill;
Where only merit constant pay receives,
Is blest in what it takes, and what it gives;
The joy unequal'd, if its end it gain,
And if it lose, attended with no pain:

Without satiety, tho' e'er so blest,
And but more happy as the more distress'd:
The broadest mirth unfeeling folly wears,
Less pleasing far than virtue's very tears:

Good, from each object, from each place acquir'd,
For ever exercis'd, yet never tir'd ;
Never elated while one man's oppress'd ;
Never dejected, while another's blest ;
And where no wants, no wishes can remain,
Since but to wish more virtue, is to gain.

See the sole bliss heav'n could on all bestow !
Which who but feels can taste, but thinks can
know ;

Yet poor with fortune, and with learning blind,
The bad must miss, the good untaught will find ;
Slave to no sect, who takes no private road,
But looks thro' nature up to nature's God ;
Pursues that chain which links th' immense design,
Joins heav'n and earth, and mortal and divine ;

Sees, that no being any bliss can know,
But touches some above, and some below ;
Learns, from this union of the rising whole,
The first, last purpose of the human soul ;
And knows where faith, law, morals, all began,
All end, in *love of God*, and *love of man*.
For him alone, *Hope* leads from goal to goal,
And opens still, and opens on his soul ;
Till lengthen'd on to *Faith*, and unconfin'd,
It pours the bliss that fills up all the mind !
He sees why nature plants in man alone
Hope of known bliss; and faith in bliss unknown :
(Nature, whose dictates to no other kind
Are giv'n in vain, but what they seek they find)
Wise is her present ; she connects in this
His greatest virtue with his greatest bliss ;

At once his own bright prospect to be blest,
And strongest motive to assist the rest.
Self-love thus push'd to social, to divine,
Gives thee to make thy neighbour's blessing thine.
Is this too little for the boundless heart?
Extend it, let thy enemies have part:
Grasp the whole worlds of reason, life, and sense,
In one close system of benevolence:
Happier as kinder, in whate'er degree,
And height of bliss but height of charity.
God loves from whole to parts; but human soul
Must rise from individual to the whole.
Self-love but serves the virtuous mind to wake,
As the small pebble stirs the peaceful lake,
The center mov'd, a circle straight succeeds,
Another still, and still another spreads;

Friend, parent, neighbour, first it will embrace;
His country next; and next all human race;
Wide and more wide, th' o'erflowings of the mind
Take ev'ry creature in, of ev'ry kind;
Earth smiles around, with boundless bounty blest,
And heav'n beholds its image in his breast.

Come then, my friend! my genius! come along,
Oh master of the poet, and the song!
And while the muse now stoops, or now ascends,
To man's low passions, or their glorious ends,
Teach me, like thee, in various nature wise,
To fall with dignity, with temper rise;
Form'd by thy converse, happily to steer
From grave to gay, from lively to severe;
Correct with spirit, eloquent with ease,
Intent to reason, or polite to please.

Oh! while along the stream of time thy name
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame;
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,
Shall then this verse to future age pretend
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?
That, urg'd by thee, I turn'd the tuneful art
From sounds to things, from fancy to the heart;
For *wit's* false mirror held up *nature's* light;
Shew'd erring pride, *whatever* IS---IS RIGHT;
That *reason, passion*, answer one great aim;
That true *self-love* and *social* are the same;
That VIRTUE only makes our bliss below;
And all our *knowledge* is, OURSELVES TO KNOW.

THE
UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

Deo opt. max.

FATHER of ALL! in ev'ry age,
In ev'ry clime ador'd,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!
Thou Great *First Cause*, least understood:
Who all my sense confin'd
To know but this, that thou art good,
And that myself am blind;

Yet gave me in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.
What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heav'n pursue.
What blessings thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives;
T' enjoy is to obey.
Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak unknowing hand
Presume thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge thy foe.
If I am right, thy grace impart,
Still in the right to stay ;
If I am wrong, O teach my heart
To find that better way.
Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught thy wisdom has deny'd,
Or aught thy goodness lent.
Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see ;
That mercy I to others show
That mercy show to me.

Mean tho' I am, not wholly so,

Since quicken'd by thy breath :

Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,

Thro' this day's life or death.

This day, be bread and peace my lot :

All else beneath the sun,

Thou know'st if best bestow'd or not,

And let thy will be done.

To thee, whose temple is all space,

Whose altar, earth, sea, skies !

One chorus let all being raise ;

All nature's incense rise !

THE
DYING CHRISTIAN
TO
HIS SOUL.
AN
ODE.

VITAL spark of heav'nly flame,
Quit, O quit this mortal frame:
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying,
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper; angels say,

Sister spirit, come away.

What is this absorbs me quite?

Steals my senses, shuts my sight,

Drowns my spirit, draws my breath?

Tell me, my Soul, can this be death?

The world recedes; it disappears!

Heav'n opens on my eyes! my ears

With sounds seraphic ring:

Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!

O grave! where is thy victory?

O death! where is thy sting?

NOTES.

ESSAY ON MAN, EP. I.

P. 10. *A wild---or garden.*] The *wild* relates to the human *passions*, productive (as he explains in the second epistle) both of good and evil. The *garden*, to human *reason*, so often *tempting* us to transgress the bounds God has set to it, and wander in fruitless enquiries.

P. 10. *Of all who blindly creep, &c.*] *i. e.* Those who only follow the blind guidance of their passions; or those who leave behind them common sense and sober reason, in their high flights through the regions of metaphysics.

P. 10. *Laugh where we must, &c.*] Intimating that human *follies* are so strangely absurd, that it is not in the power of the most *compassionate*, on some occasions, to restrain their mirth: and that human *crimes* are so flagitious, that the most *candid* have seldom an opportunity, on this subject, to exercise their virtue.

P. 11. *The strong connexions, nice dependencies.*] The thought is very noble, and expressed with great philosophic beauty and exactness. The system of the universe is a combination of *natural* and *moral* fitnesses, as the human system is, of *body* and *spirit*. By the *strong connexions*, therefore, the poet alludes to the *natural* part, and by the *nice dependencies* to the *moral*. For the *Essay on Man* is not a system of *naturalism*, but of *natural religion*. Hence it is, that, where he supposes disorders may tend to some greater good in the *natural* world,

he supposes they may tend likewise to some greater good in the *moral*, as appears from the sublime images in the following lines :

If plagues or earthquakes break not heaven's design,
 Why then a Borgia or a Catiline ?
 Who knows but he, whose hand the lightning forms,
 Who heaves old ocean, and who wings the storms,
 Pours fierce ambition in a Cæsar's mind,
 Or turns young Ammon loose to scourge mankind?

P. 14. *Egypt's god :*] Called so, because the god *Apis* was worshipped, in the form of an ox, universally over the whole land.

P. 15. *Who sees with equal eye,* &c. Matth. x. 29.

P. 16. *Hope humbly then :*] The *hope* of a happy futurity was implanted in the human breast by God himself for this very purpose, as an earnest of that bliss which always flying from us here, is reserved for the good man hereafter---

Hope travels thro', nor quits us when we die.

P. 16.---*from home.*] The construction is, "the soul being "from home (confined and uneasy) expatiates," &c. by which words it was the poet's purpose to teach, that the present life is only a state of probation for another, more suitable to the essence of the soul, and to the free exercise of its qualities.

P. 16. *Lo, the poor Indian! &c.*] The poet having bid man comfort himself with expectation of future happiness, having shewn him that this HOPE is an earnest of it, and put in one very necessary caution,

Hope humbly then, with *trembling* pinions soar;

provoked at those whom he afterwards (p. 68.) describes as building *bell on spite, and heaven on pride*, he upbraids them with the example of the poor Indian, to whom also God hath given this *common HOPE of mankind*: but though his untutored mind had betrayed him into many childish fancies concerning the nature of that future state, yet he is so far from excluding any part of his own species (a vice which could proceed only from the pride of science) that he humanely admits even his *faithful dog to bear him company*.

P. 21. *Better for us, &c.*] It might, says he, perhaps appear better to us, that there were nothing in this world but *peace and virtue*;

That never air or ocean felt the wind;
That never passion discompos'd the mind:

But then consider, that as our *natural system* is supported by the strife of its elementary particles; so is our *intellectual system* by the conflict of our passions, which are the elements of human action.

In a word, as without the benefit of tempestuous winds, both air and ocean would stagnate, corrupt, and spread universal contagion throughout all the ranks of animals that inhabit, or are supported by them; so, without the benefit of the passions, such virtue as was merely the effect of the absence of those passions, would be a lifeless calm, a stoical apathy,

Contracted all, retiring to the breast:
But strength of mind is *exercise*, not *rest*. Ep. ii. p. 38.

Therefore, instead of regarding the conflict of the elements, and the passions of the mind, as disorders, you ought to consider them as part of the *general order* of Providence: and that

they are so, appears from their always preserving the same unvaried course, throughout all ages, from the creation to the present time :

The *gen'ral order*, since the whole began,
Is kept in *nature*, and is kept in *man*.

We see, therefore, it would be doing great injustice to our author to suspect that he intended, by this, to give any encouragement to vice. His system is this : That the *passions*, for the reasons above given, are necessary to the support of virtue : that, indeed, the passions in excess produce vice, which is, in its own nature, the greatest of all evils, and comes into the world from the abuse of man's free-will ; but that God, in his infinite wisdom and goodness, deviously turns the natural bias of its malignity to the advancement of human happiness, and makes it productive of general good :

Th' ETERNAL ART educes *good* from *ill*. Ep. ii. p. 42.

P. 21. *And little less than angel, &c.*] “Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour.” Psalm viii. 9.

P. 22. *Here with degrees of swiftness, &c.*] It is a certain axiom in the anatomy of creatures, that in proportion as they are formed for strength, their swiftness is lessened ; or, as they are formed for swiftness, their strength is abated.

P. 24. *The headlong lioness.*] The manner of the lions hunting their prey in the deserts of Africa is this : At their first going out in the night-time they set up a loud roar, and then listen to the noise made by the beasts in their flight, pursuing them by the ear, and not by the nostril. It is probable the story of the jackal's hunting for the lion, was occasioned by observation of this defect of scent in that terrible animal.

P. 26. *Let earth unbalanc'd.*] *i. e.* Being no longer kept within its orbit by the different directions of its progressive and attractive motions; which, like equal weights in a balance, keep it in an equilibrium.

P. 27. *Whose body nature is, &c.*] This sublime description of the Godhead contains not only the *divinity* of St. Paul, but likewise the *philosophy* of Sir Isaac Newton.

P. 28. *As the rapt seraph, &c.*] Alluding to the name *seraphim*, signifying burners.

P. 28. *Cease then, nor Order*] That the reader may see in one view the exactness of the method, as well as force of the argument, I shall here draw up a short synopsis of this epistle. The poet begins by telling us his subject is an Essay on Man: that his end of writing is *to vindicate Providence*: that he intends to derive his arguments *from the visible things of God seen in this system*: lays down this proposition, that of all possible systems, Infinite Wisdom has formed the best: draws from thence two consequences, 1. *that there must needs be somewhere such a creature as man*; 2. *that the moral evil which he is author of, is productive of the good of the whole*. This is his general thesis; from whence he forms this conclusion, that man should rest submissive and content, and make the hopes of futurity his comfort; but not to suffer this to be the occasion of *pride*, which is the cause of all his impious complaints. He proceeds to confirm his thesis---Previously endeavours to abate our wonder at the phenomenon of *moral evil*; shews first, *its use to the perfection of the universe*, by analogy, from the use of *physical evil* in this particular system---Secondly, *its use in this system*, where it is turned providentially from its natural bias to promote virtue. Then goes on to vindicate Providence from the imputation of certain *supposed natural evils*; as he had before justified it for the permission of *real moral evil*, in shewing that, though the atheist's complaint

against Providence be on pretence of *real moral evil*, yet the true cause is his impatience under *imaginary natural evil*; the issue of a *depraved appetite for fantastical advantages*, which, if obtained, would be *useless* or *hurtful* to man, and deforming and destructive to the universe, as breaking into that *ORDER* by which it is supported.---He describes that *order, harmony, and close connexion of the parts*; and by shewing the intimate presence of God to his whole creation, gives a reason for an universe so amazingly beautiful and perfect. From all this he deduces this general conclusion, that nature being neither a blind chain of causes and effects, nor yet the fortuitous result of wandering atoms, but the wonderful art and direction of an all-wise, all-good, and free Being, *whatever IS, is RIGHT*, with regard to the disposition of God, and its ultimate tendency; which once granted, all complaints against Providence are at an end.

EPISTLE II.

P. 31. *The proper study, &c.*] The poet having shewn, in the *first* epistle, that the *ways of God* are too high for our comprehension, rightly draws this conclusion, and methodically makes it the subject of his introduction to the *second*, which treats of the *nature of man*.

P. 32. *Alike in ignorance, &c.*] *i. e.* The proper sphere of man's reason is so narrow, and the exercise of it so nice, that the too immoderate use of it is attended with the same ignorance that proceeds from the not using it at all. Yet, though in both these cases he is *abused by himself*, he has it still in his power to *disabuse* himself, in making his passions subservient to the *means*, and regulating his reason by the *end* of life.

P. 32. *Whether he thinks too little or too much.*] This is so true, that ignorance arises as well from pushing our enquiries

too far, as from not carrying them far enough, that we may observe, when speculations, even in science, are carried beyond a certain point---that point, where use is reasonably supposed to end, and mere curiosity to begin---they conclude in the most extravagant and senseless inferences ; such as the unreality of matter, the reality of space, the servility of the will, &c. The reason of this sudden fall out of full light into utter darkness, appears not to result from the natural condition of things, but to be the arbitrary decree of infinite wisdom and goodness, which imposed a barrier to the extravagancies of its giddy lawless creature, always inclined to pursue truths of less importance too far, to the neglect of those more necessary for his improvement in his station here.

P. 32. *Go measure earth, &c.*] Alluding to the noble and useful project of our modern mathematicians, to measure a degree at the equator and polar circle, in order to determine the true figure of the earth ; of great importance to astronomy and navigation.

P. 33. *Correct old time.*] This alludes to Sir Isaac Newton's Grecian Chronology, which he reformed on those two sublime conceptions, the difference between the reigns of kings and the generations of men ; and the position of the colures of the equinoxes and solstices at the time of the Argonautic expedition.

P. 33. *Superior beings, &c.*] In these lines the poet speaks to this effect : But to make you fully sensible of the difficulty of this study, I shall instance in the great Sir Isaac Newton himself ; whom, when superior beings saw capable of unfolding the whole law of nature, they were in doubt whether the owner of such prodigious sagacity should not be reckoned of their own order ; just as men, when they see the surprising marks of reason in an ape, are almost tempted to rank him with their own kind. And yet this wondrous man could go

no further in the knowledge of himself than the generality of his species.

P. 34. *Vanity, or dress.*] These are the first parts of what the poet, in the preceding line, calls the scholar's *equipage of pride*. By *vanity* is meant that luxuriancy of thought and expression in which a writer indulges himself, to shew the fruitfulness of his fancy or invention. By *dress* is to be understood a lower degree of that practice, in amplification of thought, and ornamental expression, to give force to what the writer would convey: but even this, the poet, in a severe search after truth, very justly condemns.

P. 34. *Or learning's luxury, or idleness.*] The *luxury of learning* consists in dressing up and disguising old notions in a new way, so as to make them more fashionable and palatable; instead of examining and scrutinizing their truth.

P. 34. *Or tricks to shew the stretch of human brain.*] Such as the mathematical demonstrations concerning the *small quantity of matter*, the *endless divisibility* of it, &c.

P. 34. *Expunge the whole---or lop th' excrescent parts,
Of all our vices have created arts ;]*
i. e. Those parts of natural philosophy, logic, rhetoric, &c. that administer to luxury, deceit, ambition, effeminacy, &c.

P. 39. *All spread their charms, &c.*] Though all the passions have their turn in swaying the determinations of the mind, yet every man hath one MASTER PASSION that at length stifles or absorbs all the rest. The difference of force in this ruling passion shall, at first, perhaps be very small, or even imperceptible; but nature, habit, imagination, wit, nay, even reason itself, shall assist its growth, till it hath at length drawn and converted every other into itself.

This naturally leads the poet to lament the weakness and insufficiency of human reason ; and the purpose he had in so doing, was plainly to intimate the necessity of a more perfect dispensation to mankind.

P. 41. *We, wretched subjects, &c.*] St. Paul himself did not chuse to employ other arguments, when disposed to give us the highest idea of the usefulness of Christianity. Rom. vii.

P. 42. *'Tis hers to rectify.*] The meaning of this precept is, that as the ruling passion is implanted by nature, it is reason's office to regulate, direct, and restrain, but not to overthrow it.

P. 44. *The god within the mind.*] A Platonic phrase for conscience.

P. 44. *Extremes in nature equal ends produce.*] The poet reasons to this effect : that though indeed vice and virtue so invade each other's bounds, that sometimes we can scarcely tell where one ends, and the other begins, yet great purposes are served thereby, no less than the perfecting the constitution of the whole ; as lights and shades, which run into one another in a well-wrought picture, make the harmony and spirit of the composition. But, on this account, to say there is neither vice nor virtue, the poet shews, would be just as wise as to say there is neither black nor white, because the shade of that, and the light of this, often run into one another :

Ask your own heart, and nothing is so plain ;
'Tis to mistake them, costs the time and pain.

P. 46. *Virtuous and vicious every man must be :
Few in th' extreme, but all in the degree.*
Of this the poet, with admirable sagacity, assigns the cause, in the following line :

For, vice or virtue, SELF directs it still.

An adherence or regard to what is, in the sense of the world, a man's own interest, making an extreme in either *vice* or *virtue* almost impossible. Its effect in keeping a good man from the extreme of virtue, needs no explanation; and in an ill man, self-interest shewing him the necessity of some kind of reputation, the procuring and preserving that, will keep him from the extreme of vice.

P. 49. *And beads and pray'r-books are the toys of age.*] A satire on what is called in popery the *opus operatum*.

EPISTLE III.

P. 54. *See all things for my use!*] On the contrary the wise man hath said, "the Lord hath made all things for himself." Prov. xvi. 4.

P. 54. *Nature that tyrant checks.*] Man's interest, amusement, vanity, and luxury, tie him, as it were, to the system of benevolence, by obliging him to provide for the support of other animals; and though it be, for the most part, only to devour them with the greater gust, yet this does not abate the proper happiness of the animals so preserved, to whom Providence hath not imparted the useless knowledge of their end.

P. 55. *Than favour'd man by touch ethereal slain.*] Several of the ancients, and many of the Orientals since, esteemed those who were struck by lightning as sacred persons, and the particular favourites of heaven.

P. 61. *All vocal beings, &c.*] This may be well explained by a sublime passage of the Psalmist, who, calling to mind the age of innocence, and full of the great ideas of those

..... chains of love,
 Combining all below, and all above,
 Which to one point and to one center bring
 Beast, man, or angel, servant, lord, or king ;

breaks out into this rapturous and divine apostrophe, to call back the devious creation to its prestine rectitude (that very state our author describes above) : " Praise the Lord, all his " angels ; praise him, all ye hosts. Praise ye him, sun and " moon ; praise him, all ye stars of light," &c. Psa. cxlviii.

P. 61. *Unbrib'd, unbloody, &c.*] When superstition was become so extreme as to bribe the gods with human sacrifices (see p. 68, 69.) tyranny became necessitated to woo the priest for a favourable answer :

And play'd the god an engine on his foe.

P. 62. *Learn from the birds, &c.*] It is a caution commonly practised among navigators, when thrown upon a desert coast, and in want of refreshments, to observe what fruit have been touched by the birds, and to venture on these without further hesitation.

P. 62. *Learn from the beasts, &c.*] Pliny, in his Natural History, relates several instances of animals discovering the medicinal efficacy of herbs, by their own use of them, and pointing out to some operations in the art of healing by their own practice.

P. 62. *Learn of the little nautilus*] Oppian Halieut. lib. i. describes this fish in the following manner : " They swim on " the surface of the sea, on the back of their shells, which " exactly resemble the hulk of a ship ; they raise two feet " like masts, and extend a membrane between, which serves

“ as a sail ; the other two feet they employ as oars at the
“ sides. They are usually seen in the Mediterranean.”

P. 67. *Who first taught souls enslav'd, &c.*] The poet informs us, agreeably to his exact knowledge of antiquity, that it was the politician, and not the priest (as our illiterate tribe of free-thinkers would make us believe) who first corrupted religion. Secondly, that the superstition he brought in was not invented by him, as an engine to play upon others (as the dreaming atheist feigns, who would thus miserably account for the origin of religion) but was a trap he first fell into himself.

P. 68. *Gods partial, changeful, &c.*] The ancient Pagan gods are here very exactly described.

P. 68. ---*and heav'n on pride.*] This might be very well said of those times, when no one was content to go to heaven without being received there on the footing of a god.

P. 70. *'Twas then, &c.*] The poet seems here to mean the polite and flourishing age of Greece ; and those benefactors to mankind which he had principally in view were Socrates and Aristotle, who, of all the Pagan world, spoke best of God, and wrote best of government.

P. 71. *For forms of government, &c.*] These fine lines have been strangely misunderstood : the poet's meaning, however, is this---The happiness of a people does not depend so much upon the *form* of their government, as upon the *integrity* of its *administration*.

P. 71. *For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight;*] These latter ages have seen so many scandalous contentions for *modes of faith*, to the violation of Christian charity, and dishonour of sacred Scripture, that it is not at all strange they

should become the object of so wise and benevolent an author's resentment.

P. 71. *In faith and hope, &c.*] "And now abideth faith, "hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these "is charity." 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

P. 72. *Man, like the gen'rous vine, &c.*] Having thus largely considered man in his social capacity, the poet, in order to fix a momentous truth in the mind of his reader, concludes the Epistle in recapitulating the *two principles* which concur to the support of this part of his character, namely, SELF-LOVE and SOCIAL; and shewing, that they are only two different motions of the appetite to good; by which the Author of Nature hath enabled man to find his own happiness in the happiness of the whole. This he illustrates with a thought as sublime as that general harmony he describes:

On their own axis, &c. [See page 72.

EPISTLE IV.

P. 74. *O'erlook'd, seen double.*] O'erlook'd by those who place happiness in any thing exclusive of virtue; *seen double* by those who admit any thing else to have a share with virtue in procuring happiness.

P. 76. *Order is heav'n's first law;*] *i. e.* The first law made by God relates to ORDER; which is a beautiful allusion to the Scripture history of the creation, when God first appeased the disorders of chaos, and separated light from darkness.

P. 78. *And peace, &c.*] *Conscious* innocence (says the poet) is the only source of *internal* peace; and *known* innocence, of *external*; therefore, peace is the sole issue of virtue; or, in his own emphatic words,

Peace, O VIRTUE! peace is all thy own.

P. 79. *Ob, blind to truth, &c.*] Our author having thus largely confuted the mistake of happiness's consisting in externals, proceeds to expose the terrible consequences of such an opinion on the sentiments and practice of all sorts of men, making the dissolute impious and atheistical, the religious uncharitable and intolerant, and the good restless and discontent.

P. 79. *See god-like Turenne.*] This epithet has a peculiar justness; the great man to whom it is applied, not being distinguished, from other generals, for any of his superior qualities, so much as for his providential care of those whom he led to war.

P. 80. *Lent heav'n a parent, &c.*] This last instance of the poet's illustration of the ways of Providence, the reader sees, has a peculiar elegance; where a tribute of piety to a parent is paid in a return of thanks to, and made subservient of his vindication of, the Great Giver and Father of all things.---The mother of the author, a person of great piety and charity, died the year this poem was finished, viz. 1733.

P. 81. *Shall burning Etna, &c.*] Alluding to the fate of those two great naturalists, Empedocles and Pliny, who both perished by too near an approach to Etna and Vesuvius, while they were exploring the cause of their eruptions.

P. 90. *Painful pre-eminence!*] The most plausible rival of virtue is knowledge gained by *superior parts*: yet even this is so far from giving any degree of real happiness, that it deprives men of those common comforts of life, which are a kind of support to us under the want of happiness. Such as the more innocent of those delusions which he speaks of in the second Epistle;

Those painted clouds that beautify our days, &c,

Now knowledge destroyeth all those comforts by setting man above life's weaknesses : so that he who has discarded virtue, and thinks to attain happiness by knowledge alone, reverses the fable, and in a preposterous attempt to gain the substance, loseth even the shadow.

P. 91. ---*think how Bacon shin'd, &c.*] The Lord Chancellor Bacon, one of the greatest geniuses this country ever produced, was a corrupt judge, and the meanest of flatterers.

P. 91. *See Cromwell, &c.*] This great and wicked man employed the most brilliant parts to effect the basest of purposes—the overthrow of his country's liberties, and the murder of an amiable sovereign.

P. 98. *Shew'd erring pride whatever IS, is RIGHT;*] The poet's address to his friend (Saint-John, Lord Bolingbroke) which concludes this Epistle so nobly, and ends with a recapitulation of the general argument, affords me the following observation :---There is one great beauty that shines through the whole ESSAY: the poet, whether he speaks of man as an individual, a member of society, or the subject of happiness, never misses an opportunity, while he is explaining his state under any of these capacities, to illustrate it in the most artful manner, by the enforcement of his great principle, *That every thing tendeth to the good of the whole*; from whence his system receives the reciprocal advantage of having that grand theorem realized by facts, and his facts justified on a principle of right and nature.

THE UNIVERSAL PRAYER.

Some passages in the preceding Essay having been unjustly suspected of a tendency towards *fate* and *naturalism*, the author composed this Prayer as the sum of all, to shew that his system was founded in *free-will*, and terminated in piety; that the First Cause was as well the Lord and Governor of

the Universe, as the Creator of it ; and that, by submission to his will (the great principle enforced throughout the Essay) was not meant the suffering ourselves to be carried along by a blind determination, but the resting in a religious acquiescence, and confidence full of *hope* and immortality. To give all this the greater weight, the poet chose for his model the LORD's Prayer, which, of all others, best deserves the title prefixed to his Paraphrase.

THE DYING CHRISTIAN TO HIS SOUL.

This Ode was written in imitation of the famous Sonnet of Hadrian to his departing soul ; but as much superior to his original, in sense and sublimity, as the *Christian* religion is to the *Pagan*.

